

MOBILE - Congressman Jo Bonner, R-Alabama, today issued the following statement following passage in the House of Representatives of the FY 2005 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief:

“I am very pleased the House of Representatives passed this important piece of legislation. With its overwhelming passage on a vote of 368-58, the House has reaffirmed its bipartisan commitment to providing the best equipment, the best medical care, and the most state-of-the-art resources possible for our men and women in uniform. While there is certainly no way we could ever fully repay the current and former members of our military who have made – and who continue to make – such important sacrifices each day, particularly those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, this legislation makes important strides in protecting our servicemen and women and their families.”

Among many important provisions, the supplemental appropriations measure includes an increase in the maximum Servicemember Group Life Insurance (SGLI) payout from \$250,000 to \$400,000, and an increase in the death gratuity paid to the families of military members killed in the line of duty from \$12,000 to \$100,000. In both instances, these increases are retroactive to deaths which occurred after October 7, 2001.

Additionally, the supplemental includes increased funding for force protection for deployed service members, including an increase in the number of “up-armored” military vehicles. A total of \$635 million is also appropriated for increased border security and enforcement of immigration laws, and \$680 million has been included to fund ongoing international peacekeeping efforts.